Throughout the first half of the twentieth century, North African Jews played an outsized role as music-makers and purveyors of music across the Maghrib. In Morocco, Algeria, and Tunisia, all under French rule, Jewish vocalists, instrumentalists, and sonic impresarios utilized the phonograph to record the Andalusian classical tradition while simultaneously pioneering new, popular musical forms. Those efforts engendered fervent responses from Muslim and Jewish fans and critics, and so too, from French authorities apprehensive about the unfettered flow of recorded music that increasingly brought Muslims and Jews together. Through a focus on three such phonograph records and their trajectories, this talk rethinks the Jewish-Muslim past in the region through its sounds.

A Sound History: Rethinking the Jewish-Muslim Past in the Twentieth Century Maghrib Through Music

OCT 18
12:00 - 1:30 PM
Room 328, MORRICE HALL
3485 McTavish Street, Montreal